

# New investment to help young people give something back to their community through sport

Submitted by: Step Up To Serve

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- Sport England and the #iwill fund will each invest £1.5 million
- Projects will use sport as a tool to help 10-20 year-olds get involved in social action and give back to their communities

Young people across England will soon be given new opportunities to combine the benefits of sport with their desire to give something back to their community, thanks to a new three year partnership between Sport England and the #iwill fund, a joint investment by Big Lottery Fund and Central Government.

Funded using National Lottery money, the new £3 million partnership will support projects which create opportunities for 10-20 year-olds to use sport as a way to do 'social action'; a range of rewarding things in and for their community, including volunteering, fundraising for local projects and campaigning. Research (<http://www.iwill.org.uk/ysa-survey-17/>) shows that 70 per cent of young people would like to take part in this kind of social action in the future , and over half (56 per cent) of 16-24 years olds want to take part in sport.

Sport England will invest in up to 20 projects for up to three years, with the pilots being used to improve future projects. Sport England is looking for a range of exciting ideas, for example:

- Web design students at a further education college working with local sports clubs to develop their websites and social media presence.
- A community group arranging for young women to deliver dance activities to other women, as a way of building confidence.

It's the first major investment into social action from Sport England in their four year plan to support volunteering projects and opportunities between now and 2021.

Sport England's director of sport, Phil Smith, said:

"Every week, millions of people already give something back to their community through sport. Whether that's coaching a player, organising an event or even washing a team kit, there's an army of dedicated people making sport happen.

"But the way people give their time is changing and there is much more to volunteering than the traditional jobs. We want to harness the skills and passion for social action that young people have. We're looking for great local partners with fantastic ideas to invest in. If, like us, you believe in the power of volunteering and sport to change lives, and have a great new idea, then we'd be really interested in talking to you."

The #iwill campaign (<http://www.iwill.org.uk/>) is run by the charity Step Up to Serve. Its CEO, Charlotte Hill, said:

“Youth social action is about realising a young person’s potential through helping others. This is an incredibly exciting initiative that will change lives. We are delighted to partner with Sport England on this and can’t wait to see the ideas of our young people brought to life.”

Minister for Civil Society, Rob Wilson, said:

"Inspiring young people to volunteer and make a difference in their communities is a habit we want them to continue for a lifetime. Using sporting projects is a fantastic way to achieve this, allowing young people to transform their neighbourhoods, bringing communities together and also giving them life skills that benefit their future too."

Big Lottery Fund’s England portfolio development director, Gemma Bull, said:

“This new partnership with Sport England, as part of the #iwill fund, provides an exciting opportunity to support young people to develop their skills and confidence. Working with partners and their networks we can reach more young people, enabling them to take the lead in creating new social action opportunities that benefit themselves and their local communities.”

The deadline for applying for funding is 12pm on 24 April 2017. Applications can be made through Sport England’s website: [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

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Notes to editors:

#iwill campaign

#iwill is a UK-wide campaign aiming to get 6 in 10 young people involved in social action by 2020. The #iwill Fund is independent from the campaign, but supports its aims. It is a joint investment by Big Lottery Fund and the Department of Culture, Media & Sport – each has committed £20 million up to 2020 to support the creation of high quality social action opportunities for young people.

The #iwill campaign is being coordinated by the charity Step Up To Serve. It was launched in 2013 after Government research into how the business, education, public and voluntary sectors could support young people, aged of 10 and 20, to engage in social action (campaigning, fundraising and volunteering). HRH The Prince of Wales is the Patron of Step Up To Serve, and the #iwill campaign. To date more than 600 organisations from across UK society have pledged to support the campaign goal of enabling more than 60% of 10-20 year-olds to participate in social action. More information can be found at [www.iwill.org.uk](http://www.iwill.org.uk) and @iwill\_campaign.

More information and interview requests

For more information and to request interviews, please contact the Sport England press office: Andrew St Ledger on 020 7273 1800 or [andrew.stledger@sportengland.org](mailto:andrew.stledger@sportengland.org)